

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ATHENS 00524 191140Z  
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 FCC-01  
INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 USIA-06 COME-00 BIB-01  
NASA-01 OES-07 SP-02 DODE-00 /040 W  
-----056153 200157Z /63

R 190937Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4192  
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
AMEMBASSY BERN  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMCONSUL ZURICH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ATHENS 0524

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

ZURICH FOR LIECHTENSTEIN

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ETEL, GR  
SUBJECT: GREEK VIEWS ON SPACE SHUTTLE VS ARIANE AS CHOICE FOR  
INTELSAT LAUNCH VEHICLE

REF: STATE 6031

1. ON JANUARY 18 EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH JOHN LIASKOVITIS,  
HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SYSTEMS,  
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT SECTION, HELLENIC  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ORGANIZATION (OTE) TO BRIED LIASKOVITIS PER  
INSTRUCTIONS IN REFTEL ON ECONOMIC/TECHNICAL ADVANTAGES OF  
SPACE SHUTTLE AS POSSIBLE INTELSAT LAUNCH VEHICLE.

2. LIASKOVITIS WAS AWARE OF ALL ARGUMENTS INCLUDED IN REFTEL  
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ATHENS 00524 191140Z

AND SAID THAT, AS OF NOW, FOF'S POSITION WILL BE BASED SOLELY  
ON BASIS OF MOST RELIABILITY FOR THE LEAST COST. HE NOTED,  
HOWEVER, THAT BOTH AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND ARE LEANING IN  
FAVOR OF ARIANE. SWITZERLAND IS STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF  
ARIANE BECAUSE OF A SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL INTEREST  
RESULTING FROM THE PRODUCTION OF ARIANE COMPONENTS. AUSTRIA,  
WHILE HAVING NO FINANCIAL STAKE, IS TILTING TOWARDS THE

ARIANE BECAUSE IT FAVORS THE IDEA OF A EUROPEAN SPACE VEHICLE. LIASKOVITIS SPECULATED THAT, ALTHOUGH THE GOG IS NOW PLANNING TO BASE ITS DECISION ON STRICTLY ECONOMIC/ TECHNICAL GROUNDS, THE COISE COULD BE MDE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS IF EC NATIONS DEMAND ARIANE SUPPORT AS PART OF THE EC ENTRY PRICE. LIASKOVITIS EVADED ANSWERING WHICH WAY THE GOG IS CURRENTLY LEANING. IF THE GOG CANNOT AGREE WITH AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND BEFORE THE ISSUE IS VOTED ON, THEIR GROUP WILL ABSTAIN FROM VOTING.

3. LIASKOVITIS NOTED THAT THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS--AND THE PRIMARY THRUST OF ARIANE SUPPORTERS--IS THAT THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE IS QUESTIONABLE. BASED ON BOTH PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND ON RECENT SPECULATION IN THE AMERICAN PRESS, THE INTELSAT MEMBERS HAVE BECOME WORRIED THAT NASA'S PROGRAMS COULD BE CUT BACK TO THE POINT WHERE SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCHES OF INTELSAT SATELLITES WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SATELLITES. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IS THE LIMITED NUMBER OF SHUTTLES WHICH IS CURRENTLY PLANNED. MOREOVER,IF ARIANE IS NOT CHOSEN, IT WILL PROBABLY NOT SURVIVE. THEREFORE,IF THE COMMERCIAL SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM IS TERMINATED, INTELSAT WILL BE LEFT WITHOUT ANY LAUNCHING FACILITIES UNLESS IT CHOOSES THE ARIANE.

4. SECONDARY OBJECTIONS TO THE SPACE SHUTTLE CONCERN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ATHENS 00524 191140Z

RISING COST OF LAUNCHES AND "SUDDEN DEMANDS" BY NASA FOR "PREMATURE COMMITMENTS." LIASKOVITIS SAID THAT PROJECTED LAUNCH COSTS HAD RISEN CONSIDERABLY SINCE THEY WERE FIRST SET, WHILE ARIANE COSTS HAVE REMAINED LOW AND ARE NOW LESS THAN SHUTTLE COSTS. FINALLY, LIASKOVITIS MENTIONED THE FEELING OF MANY INTELSAT MEMBERS THAT NASA HAS NOT BEEN ACTING "LIKE A COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE." AN EXAMPLE HE USED WAS THAT NASA HAS ASKED INTELSAT FOR A QUICK DECISION ON THE CHOICE OF THE SATELLITE PROPULSION MECHANISM TO BE USED TO MOVE THE INTELSAT SATELLITES FROM THE SPACE SHUTTLE ORBIT INTO THEIR PERMANENT ORBITS. ACCORDING TO LIASKOVITIS, THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS IS IRRITATED AT THIS BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE A) THAT NASA SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FURNISHING THE PROPULSION SYSTEM,AND B) THE TIME FRAME GIVEN FOR THE DECISION WAS TOO SHORT TO PROPERLY EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES. BECAUSE OF THIS AND OTHER UNSPECIFIED NASA PRACTICES, ARIANE ADHERENTS FEEL THAT NASA WOULD BE EASIER TO DEAL WITH IF THEY HAD COMPETITION.

5. IF RESERVATIONS HELD BY GOG ARE SHARED BY A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF OTHER MEMBERS, IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IF THE DEPARTMENT COULD FURNISH FURTHER INFORMATION ON LONG-RANGE PROSPECTS FOR THE SPACE SHUTTLE, SPECIFICALLY

INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES NOW PLANNED AND  
PROBABLE FUTURE LAUNCHING COST FORMULA. COPIES OF  
FAVORABLE PRESS COVERAGE WOULD BE USEFUL IN ADDITION TO  
INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM NASA. THIS SHOULD BE FORWARDED  
EARLY ENOUGH FOR EMBASSIES TO RE-APPROACH APPROPRIATE OFFI-  
CIALS PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 1-8 BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING.  
MILLS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLICIES, COMMUNICATION SATELLITES, ROCKETS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978ATHENS00524  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780029-0991  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** ATHENS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780147/aaaabnko.tel  
**Line Count:** 123  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** e0f13be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EB  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 STATE 6031  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3750748  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** GREEK VIEWS ON SPACE SHUTTLE VS ARIANE AS CHOICE FOR INTELSAT LAUNCH VEHICLE  
**TAGS:** ETEL, GR  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/e0f13be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014